Recommendations of Committee on Optimum Utilisation of AFHQ Employees

4399. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1089 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 28 November, 2001 and state:

(a) whether the said Committee has since finalised its recommendations on optimum utilisation of AFHQ employees;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations made and decisions taken by Government thereon;

(c) if not, the reasons therefore; and

(d) the areas of difference among members of the Committee and what efforts have been made to resolve them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Committee's Report could not be finalised due to lack of unanimity amongst members of the Committee.

(d) the main differences amongst the members of the Committee concern the role of the Armed Force Head Quarters (AFHQ) Civil Service. The Service Headquarters perceive the role of AFHQ civilians in a historical perspective *i.e.* limited to be 'support cadre'. The Service Headquarters have stated that upgradation of AFHQ cadre from a functional need of a 'support cadre' to 'decision making cadre' is not desirable due to operational imperatives and that such upgradation also creates protocol and functional parity equation problems between AFHQ civilian officials and uniformed personnel. Discussions have been held at the highest levels in the Ministry of Defence to narrow down these differences.